

School Programs for Healthy Eating to Prevent Obesity

Program description:

School-based programs for healthy eating include those that discourage children from consuming sweetened carbonated drinks and more comprehensive curricula that increase children's knowledge about healthy food choices, including the USDA's recommended food groups for a well-balanced meal: whole grains, lean proteins, and low-fat dairy. Some programs try to build self-monitoring skills such as keeping a food diary or recognizing cues that prompt intake of less healthy foods. In some programs, educational materials are sent to parents; typically, this content is part of the overall health education curriculum and taught by classroom teachers who have received brief training in nutrition guidelines and strategies for healthy eating for children. In the evaluation of these programs they are usually compared to the standard health education curriculum, which may also contain content on healthy eating.

Typical age of primary program participant: 8

Typical age of secondary program participant: N/A

Meta-Analysis of Program Effects

Outcomes Measured	Primary or Secondary Participant	No. of Effect Sizes	Unadjusted Effect Sizes (Random Effects Model)			Adjusted Effect Sizes and Standard Errors Used in the Benefit-Cost Analysis					
						First time ES is estimated			Second time ES is estimated		
			ES	SE	p-value	ES	SE	Age	ES	SE	Age
Child obesity – body mass index	P	3	-0.099	0.01	0.00	-0.099	0.01	10	-0.099	0.01	20

Benefits and costs were not estimated for obesity prevention programs.

Discount Rates Applied to the Meta-Analysis

Type of Discount	Discount Rate
1- Less well-implemented comparison group or observational study, with some covariates.	0.5
2- Well-implemented comparison group design, often with many statistical controls.	0.5
3- Well-done observational study with many statistical controls (e.g., instrumental variables).	0.75
4- Random assignment, with some implementation issues.	0.75
5- Well-done random assignment study.	1.00
Program developer = researcher	0.5
Unusual (not "real-world") setting	0.5
Weak measurement used	0.5

Studies Used in the Meta-Analysis

- James, J., Thomas, P., & Kerr, D. (2007). Preventing childhood obesity: Two year follow-up results from the Christchurch obesity prevention programme in schools (CHOPPS). *British Medical Journal*, 335(7623), 762-764.
- Moore, J. B., Pawloski, L. R., Goldberg, P., Oh, K. M., Stoehr, A., & Baghi, H. (2009). Childhood obesity study: A pilot study of the effect of the nutrition education program "Color My Pyramid." *The Journal of School Nursing*, 25(3), 230-239.
- Muckelbauer, R., Libuda, L., Clausen, K., Reinehr, T., & Kersting, M. (2009). A simple dietary intervention in the school setting decreased incidence of overweight in children. *Obesity Facts*, 2(5), 282-285.